

Weoley Hill Village Council
Minutes of the 94th AGM Meeting
Held at WHVH on Tuesday 6th December 2022



1.	<p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>Spencer Webb WHVC Chair, welcomed everyone to the 94th AGM and the first held in person since 2019 as a result of the covid pandemic.</p> <p>Council Members present were: Spencer Webb (SW) Chairperson; Sharon Yeomans (SY) [E. M. & S. C rep.]; Wiebiena Heesterman (WH) Environment ; Tom Magrath (TMG) Weoley Hill Village News Co-ordinator;) Hall Management; Tessa Mitchell (TM) Secretary; Jonathan Stanton (JS) Hall Treasurer; Sylvette Flatman (SF); Richard Trengrouse (WH Blog)</p> <p>6 residents were in attendance.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from: Ralph Lawson (WHVC Treasurer); Paul Levesley (PL) (Hall Management); Annette Booth; Gwynneth McGrath and Carole Lowe (BVT)</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the 93rd AGM 1st December 2021</p> <p>The minutes were accepted by the meeting as a true and accurate record. Their acceptance was proposed by Tessa Mitchell. and seconded by Tom McGrath. These were duly signed and dated by SW.</p> <p>No matters arising</p>
3.	<p>Chairs Address</p> <p>Spencer Webb thanked residents for taking the time to attend on such a chilly winter evening. He then went on to present an update of activities and developments during the past year.</p> <p><u>Weoley Hill Village Hall</u></p> <p>The halls longstanding caretaker / manager left in August 2021 and BVT have yet to appoint a replacement. Temporary cover remains in place and Paul and Jonathan are continuing to do an amazing job of running the hall in the meantime.</p> <p>Like everyone else the Council are looking at ways to save money at the hall with the current increased costs of living, particularly in relation to energy prices. Paul and Jonathan have been leading on this, helping out with cleaning and daily maintenance and through arranging the installation of smart heating which had had a very positive impact on energy consumption and associated environmental impact. Mr Webb expressed his and members appreciation of the work</p>

that the Hall Management Committee and particularly Paul and Jonathan have undertaken to ensure the ongoing operation of the hall, which is a key community asset.

Weoley Hill Village News

Mr Webb thanked Bob Booth for his dedicated and significant work on the Weoley Hill Village News over many years. Bob has now finally (at the second attempt!) managed to step down from his role as editor and passed the baton onto the new editorial team of Pav Sahota, Anthea Owen and Gwyneth McGrath. Mr Webb thanked the new team for stepping into this role, as without them the Village News would not have been able to continue. The first edition was a great success and they are looking forward to building on this moving forward. They are very keen to receive articles and contributions from residents were encouraged to get in touch.

A big thanks was also given to Tom McGrath and the delivery team who ensure that the Village News gets distributed to every home (around 900) in Weoley Hill. In addition to the Village News there is also the E-news / blog which is managed by Richard Trengrouse and thanks were expressed to Richard for his ongoing work on this.

Community Events and Initiatives

The easing of lockdown restrictions and move out of covid enabled a number of events to be held during the year including:

- A tea party for Ukraine which raised over £700
- The Jubilee Big Lunch which brought residents together and was a great success despite the pouring rain
- The Street Association Quiz – which again gave residents the opportunity to come together and saw the hall at full capacity
- Residents meeting with Birmingham University to discuss the state of the University owned buildings on The Close

A former popular Weoley Hill event making a return this year is the Children's Christmas Party which is taking place on the 17th December. All local children and families are welcome to what is hoped to return to being an annual event

Another event that returned this year after a 2-year absence was the Weoley Hill bonfire. This annual event jointly organised with the Scouts and the cricket club is a much loved and attended community event and a key source of revenue for the Council. This year's event was a complete sell out with 2000 people coming to enjoy the evening. Feedback was extremely positive. Mr Webb thanked the organising committee for all the hard work that goes into delivering this event and all the volunteers who ensure that the evening goes smoothly and safely. Volunteers to support the event are essential as it couldn't run without the community's support and if anyone would like to volunteer they were asked to get in touch.

	<p>The date for the 2023 Bonfire has been confirmed as Saturday 4th November – please save the date!</p> <p>Moving into 2023</p> <p>Mr Webb confirmed that the Council’s focus as a resident’s association will be to continue to support the local community through developing and delivering initiatives and events in and around the hall. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the cost-of-living crisis the Council are speaking to Birmingham Warm Spaces to see if the hall can be used as a warm and welcoming space during the colder months. • The Village News Team will continue to promote and support positive actions around issues affecting residents and the area in general through engagement and delivery of an informative and entertaining newsletter • Hall user and resident engagement will continue to look at what facilities residents want in the area and what the council should prioritise. The Council has ideas but would really like more resident involvement in how to invest the money we have to make the biggest impact in the area. All residents were encouraged to get in touch with ideas and suggestions. • The Council will also seek to build and strengthen new relationships with BVT, who have undergone a period of significant staff changes. Jess Allan left earlier this year and after a period of instability Carol Lowe has now been appointed to support the hall which is a welcome development. • Work will also continue to engage with more residents and the Street Associations as well as developing links with other organisations such as Friends of Bournville. • The 2023 bonfire event will also take up considerable time and co-ordination <p>Mr Webb concluded by thanking all the volunteers who contribute to the village council. It’s a great team effort and everyone’s contributions are greatly appreciated.</p>
4.	<p>EMSC Report – Mrs Sharon Yeomans</p> <p>Ms Yeomans updated on BVTs Bio-Diversity Plan drafted in conjunction with the Wildlife Trust, which includes the wildflower meadow and mini forest in the Parkway. The wildflower meadow, now in its 4th year, looked amazing this year and succeeded in attracting insects and other wildlife. Severn Trent Water have also given an undertaking to maintain the mini forest for 30 years. Discussions are currently taking place with the Brain Injuries Trust in relation to planting further trees at that end of the Parkway.</p> <p>Ms Yeomans concluded her update with confirmation that BVT are continuing with the Management Charge Review. During 2022 residents have had opportunities to comment on what’s useful and needed and what they are prepared to pay for. The findings are now</p>

	<p>being collated and are expected to be shared early in 2023 for comment. This will then feed into the next stage and the legal review. It is anticipated that this will take most of 2023 to complete and there will be more engagement throughout the process.</p> <p>Bob Booth asked if there was any update on previous work undertaken by BVT in putting the Parkway forward for Green Flag status. This was not progressed previously with the lack of wildflowers given as a reason. Ms Yeomans confirmed that this hasn't been progressed but does link into the Biodiversity Plan and is covered at each EMSC meeting.</p>
5.	<p>WHVC Treasurers Report – Mr Ralph Lawson The Chairman, Mr Webb presented the accounts on behalf of Mr Lawson who was unable to attend this evening. The income and expenditure for the last 12 months are itemised and as of 1st October 2022 there was £1815.70 in the councils 2 accounts. The accounts have been examined by Mr J Surtees.</p> <p>No questions were received and the accounts were proposed by Mr Webb and seconded by Mr Richard Trengrouse.</p>
6.	<p>Hall Management Accounts – Mr Jonathan Stanton Mr Stanton gave an overview of the accounts which showed that the opening balance 1.10.21 was £16,965.92 and the closing balance as of 30.9.22 was £22,842.77 Income during this period was £16,967, a significant increase on £1902.20 in the previous year which was impacted by covid.</p> <p>Expenditure during the year has increased from £4,465.50 to £12884.63, largely attributable to the increase in energy costs. The best possible new fixed term contract has been sourced and the installation of the new smart heating system has helped considerably to ensure costs are controlled as much as possible. The sanding of the hall floor has also been a major cost.</p> <p>The Accounts have been audited by Mr David Marlow.</p> <p>The Hall Accounts were proposed by Mr Webb and seconded by Mr Tom McGrath</p>
6.	<p>Appointment of Account Auditor / Inspectors Mr Webb proposed that Mr John Surtees and Mr David Marlow are asked to audit the accounts again in 2022/23. This was seconded by Dr Wiebina Heesterman.</p>
7.	<p>Environment – Dr Wiebina Heesterman Dr Heesterman reminded those present that the biggest environmental event this year had been COP 27. However, residents in Weoley Hill can help and take action now to get rid of fossil fuel and not use</p>

	<p>pesticides. Tree planting such as the mini forest can be undertaken and lawns can also act as carbon sinks.</p> <p>Dr Heesterman would be very happy to share further information with any residents wanting more information.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Election of WHVC Members</p> <p>Ms Tessa Mitchell confirmed that 4 members of WHVC have come to the end of their current terms: Tom McGrath, Sylvette Flatman, Paul Levesley and Spencer Webb. All have agreed to stand again and were duly elected as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom McGrath – proposed by Mrs Wiebiena Heesterman and seconded by • Sylvette Flatman - proposed by Mr Paul Levesley and seconded by Jonathan Stanton • Paul Levesley - proposed by Jonathan Stanton and seconded by Spencer Webb • Spencer Webb – proposed by Tessa Mitchell and seconded by Gwynneth McGrath <p>Mr Spencer Webb asked that anyone else who wanted to join the Council going forward or was considering it should contact him. It is not an onerous commitment with 10 meetings a year and some additional work around managing the village hall and activities. However, without members and volunteers the council, established by George Cadbury himself, will not be able to continue.</p> <p>Ms Mitchell also thanked Mr Webb for all his work on behalf of the Council.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>University Buildings on The Close</p> <p>Mr Tom McGrath gave an update as Ms Owen was unwell and unable to attend. The buildings on The Close are Grade 2 listed and have been empty for many years. They are owned by the University of Birmingham and residents are concerned that they are unused and deteriorating. An article was included in the Village News, followed by a public meeting which was very well attended by residents. This was followed up by a walkabout of the site Trevor Payne, UoB Director of Estates and 17 residents.</p> <p>Residents asked a number of questions about the state of the buildings and plans for future use. Mr Payne maintained that the buildings are watertight but visually residents have highlighted missing tiles and increasing deterioration. Disappointing despite request the visit did not include any access into the properties. However Mr Payne did commit to the roof tiles being repaired but this currently remains outstanding.</p> <p>Going forward it was confirmed the University has plans to become one of the top 5 global universities in the world and the properties</p>

	<p>could potentially be used for visiting academics and their families. There was also a commitment to maintain communications with the group.</p> <p>This was acknowledged as while not wholly satisfactory it was a form of progress. The group of interested residents will continue to meet and press the University for improved maintenance and upkeep of the buildings. The group will also develop links with other organisations such as the Historic Buildings Trust for any advice and support that can be given. It was felt that a positive relationship with the university was essential.</p> <p>Mr McGrath expressed his thanks to all residents who have attended the meetings and to Ms Owen for pulling group together.</p> <p>Mr Richard Trengrouse commented that the university have recently submitted a tender for eco lodges on their main campus and on the Selly Oak site but there was no master plan. The cottages on West Hill were not included on this. He has also previously tried unsuccessfully to have the buildings put on the City's 'At Risk' Register. He also noted that there is no longer any effective local newspaper to help take these concerns forward and felt that the University almost needed to be embarrassed into sorting these out. Talking about long term plans into 2045 totally fails to recognise the City's current housing shortages and issues. It may be an idea to invite the University to next year's AGM. Ms Mitchell confirmed that an invitation to attend this year's AGM had been sent but no reply received. Now that there is a named contact that could be extended again for 2023.</p>
10.	<p>Hall Management and Future Activity</p> <p>Mr Webb facilitated a discussion with those present on future ideas for the hall and what additional facilities people would like to see.</p> <p>Suggestions included picnic benches, somewhere to stay sit and have picnic. BVT have indicated they are happy in principle. Outdoor table tennis facilities in the parkway were also suggested along with a cafe / hatch like Rowheath. Attempts were made previously to get a coffee van but there was an issue with licences and regulations. The Council have looked at providing refreshments through a grant to increase the size of the kitchen. The area has lots of dog walkers. Would residents want and support a café facility? Previous plans for a kitchen extension were drawn up when the previous extension was built and could be revisited. The current kitchen is not accessible for wheelchairs.</p> <p>Cycle racks at Hall were muted to encourage less car use. This has also been discussed with BVT and could be progressed if appropriate funding sources can be identified.</p>

	<p>There are also a few under-utilised spaces in the hall and needs identified by users for better storage. How can underused space be better utilised?</p> <p>The hall is difficult to heat due to its construction. Thermal imaging showed that significant heat is lost via the windows. Internal wall insulation also being explored. Ground source heat pumps for communal buildings may become an option going forward. Not clear yet whether these would work but will continue to be explored. Solar panels on the roof may also be an option.</p> <p>There is currently a big hole in the shed and the roof remains unfixed. It has been raised with BVT but the organisation is going through changes and challenges currently. This has also impacted on BVT supporting the Council to look at becoming a Community Interest Organisation which may assist with accessing grants to help progress developments.</p> <p>Mr Webb concluded the discussion by asking how the Council could better engage with residents and involve more residents in the hall and in developing activities? We have a great community asset in the hall but it needs community involvement and engagement to maintain it. Anyone with any interest in or experience of grant applications was asked to get in touch along with anyone with any ideas or suggestions regarding the hall going forward.</p> <p>Mr Webb also reminded everyone present that the hall will be 100 years old in 2026. An occasion that should be marked and ideas welcome.</p>
12.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Mr Bob Booth commented that several years ago it was planned to extend the tennis club room out onto the patio area. Is this still being considered? Mr Webb stated that there were no specific ideas currently. The kitchen extension was being considered but all ideas are welcome. Extending space to maximise use is certainly an option to consider.</p> <p>Thanks were also expressed to all members of the local community who have been picking up litter. The whole area is amazingly clean.</p> <p>Finally, Mr Booth expressed his disappointment at the very low turnout for this year's AGM. Mr Webb and Ms Mitchell outlined the advertising undertaken including the noticeboards and the blog but acknowledged that the date had unfortunately been left out of The Village News with the changeover. This will be rectified next year. Mr Booth felt that the hall can be packed if AGM advertised well and suggested that a date for 2023 should be circulated after the next Council meeting and</p>

	<p>that an external speaker would also help.</p> <p>The meeting concluded with Mr Spencer Webb thanking everyone for attending and supporting the Village Council.</p>	
	<p>Minutes Agreed as an accurate representation</p> <p>Signed</p> <p>Date:</p>	